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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/752,444	01/03/2001	Keisuke Imai	0165-278	1417

7590 03/19/2002
Thomas W. Cole
Nixon Peabody LLP
8180 Greensboro Drive, Suite 800
McLean, VA 22102

EXAMINER

LAM, THANH

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2834

DATE MAILED: 03/19/2002

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.
09/752,444

Applicant(s)
Imai et al.

Examiner
Thanh Lam

Art Unit
2834



-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136 (a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on _____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11; 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-4 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above, claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-4 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claims _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are objected to by the Examiner.
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 13) ☒ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d).
a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
*See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e).

Attachment(s)

- 15) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 18) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 16) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 19) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 17) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s). _____ 20) ☐ Other: _____

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DETAILED ACTION

Priority

1. Receipt is acknowledged of papers submitted under 35 U.S.C. 119(a)-(d), which papers have been placed of record in the file.

Drawings

2. Figure 3 should be designated by a legend such as --Prior Art-- because only that which is old is illustrated. See MPEP § 608.02(g).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 1-4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over admitted prior art (figure 3 of the application) in view of Sakata.

Regarding claim 1 and 4, Prior art discloses a roll connector structure for a vehicle including a stator side casing (118) which is fixed to a steering column side member (steering shaft page 2, line 11 of the specification), a rotor side casing (120) which is mounted to the stator

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side casing and rotates integrally with a steering wheel (102), and a cable which is accommodated between the stator side casing and the rotor side casing in a state of being wound in spiral manner (page 2, line 20-22 of the application specification). However, prior art does not disclose at least one steering switch is connected to the rotor side casing without wiring.

Sakata discloses at least one steering switch (3) is connected to the rotor side casing (4) without wiring.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to rearrange the rotary connector and steering switch of Prior art to accommodate the arrangement with the steering switch is connected to the rotor as disclosed by Sakata, the arrangement would provide the roll connector structure with ease to assembly.

Regarding claim 2, it is noted that prior art discloses the rotor side casing has at least one connector (124), and the at least one steering switch has a plug portion (114) corresponding to the at least one connector (122).

Regarding 3, it is noted that Sakata discloses one portion of the at least one steering switch (3) is formed integrally with the rotor side casing (4), and other portion (8) of the at least one steering switch is connected to the one portion of the at least one steering switch.

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Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Thanh Lam whose telephone number is (703) 308-7626. The fax phone number for this Group is (703) 305-3431.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the Group receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0656.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Thanh Lam', with a stylized, cursive script.

Thanh Lam

Patent Examiner